

**Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.**  
**Board of Education**  
**Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting held on March 15, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street.

D. Zukowski, Chair	L. Rodrigue
J. Vouros, Vice Chair	A. Uberti
D. Ramsey, Secretary	T. Vadas
R. Harriman (absent)	5 Staff
D. Cruson	15 Public
J. Kuzma	1 Press
J. Larkin	
C. Savo	
M. Irvine	

Ms. Zukowski called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Mr. Vouros joined virtually.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the two donations to Newtown High School and the correspondence report.

Mrs. Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Public Participation

Item 4 – Reports

Chair Report: Ms. Zukowski reported that one of the bids for the Hawley HVAC pulled out so a new bid process was needed and new bids are expected soon. The Legislative Council will hold a public hearing for the Town and Board of Education budgets tomorrow night. The high school musical Footloose opens on Thursday.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Rodrigue continues meetings with parents on the budget. Members of PEAC put together a budget brochure which was shared in her newsletter. On March 23 the high school will have an earl dismissal schedule to allow juniors to take the SAT. She shared updates on the state blueprint to transform education which Fran Rabinowitz spoke about at a Board meeting.

Committee Reports:

Mr. Vouros spoke about the Curriculum and Instruction Committee meeting March 8 where Mrs. Uberti presented the para professional development plan. Iready reports were sent to parents which found there is some learning loss due to the pandemic. Austin Cirella and Kevin Eppy will present two curriculums tonight.

Mr. Ramsey reported on the Communications Sub-committee March 14 meeting. They are using the Smores program for the new format and continue to highlight district happenings. This time it will be centered on the budget highlights.

Mr. Cruson reported the Policy Committee met last Wednesday and discussed the retaliation and whistle blowing policy as well as three policies from Covid-19. They are continuing to discuss the facemask and remote learning and distance education policies. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Sub-committee met, reviewed our current charge and created a charge for the new committee. They will meet quarterly or as needed.

Mrs. Kuzma said the Social Emotional Health and Wellness Committee met March 4, welcomed Anne Dalton, and discussed making sure she can ensure the resources available are what we need. We will also reach out to groups in the town. Dr. Rodrigue mentioned the drug and alcohol prevention council was resuming.

Mrs. Larkin said the CFF Committee met last Thursday. She mentioned items in the financial report. We are projecting a higher year-end balance mainly due to positions. They also discussed other purchased services, out-of-district transportation increases, and out-of-district tuition. Mr. Tait introduced an inventory management system. Bob Gerbert will be the liaison for large improvement projects.

#### Student Reports:

Ms. Savo reported that Junior Prom tickets are on sale and congratulated the Winterguard for their recent win. The Annual Day of Silence is April 8.

Mr. Irvine noted that Footloose tickets were on sale. Unified Basketball had their tournament last Thursday. He highlighted the various results for the winter sports teams.

#### Financial Report:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the financial report for the month ending February 28, 2022. Mr. Ramsey seconded.

Mrs. Vadas presented an overview of the report.

Motion passes unanimously.

#### Item 5 – Presentations

##### Capstone Projects:

Dr. Longobucco reported this was the second year of full implementation of the Capstone projects. These are student driven passion projects and receive one credit which is a mastery based assessment. It is a semester long class in their senior year with a pass or fail grade. Three senior spoke about their projects. Connor Faxon created a YouTube channel where he taught guitar lessons. Christina Savo created a self-sustaining Italian Club and a step-by-step guide to forming a club. Katherine Sargent created medical kits for the marching band and band director.

##### Computer Integration Curriculum Grade 7 and 8:

Austin Cirella presented this curriculum.

##### Technology Education Curriculum Grade 7 and 8:

Kevin Epply presented this curriculum.

#### Item 6 – Old Business

##### Economics Curriculum:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved to approve the Economics Curriculum. Mrs. Kuzma seconded Motion passes unanimously.

##### World Religions Curriculum:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson move that the Board of Education approve the World Religions Curriculum. Mrs. Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

#### Item 7 – New Business

##### Transportation Bid:

Dr. Rodrigue reported that she and Mrs. Vadas spoke to our attorney and vendor and wanted to have enough time to review the bid and discuss it in executive session inviting other Town

board members before awarding the bid. An attorney will be present. We want to strengthen areas in the RFP because we have had multiple issues with transportation with lots of concerns including bus driver shortages. This meeting would occur sometime next week. The vendor knows we are pausing right now. Mrs. Vadas said they have extended the RFP to our April 5 meeting.

Extending the Strategic Plan:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education extend the current Strategic Plan.

Mr. Ramsey seconded.

Ms. Zukowski noted the plan was revised in 2016 and felt with a new superintendent starting that we extend the plan through 2023 so that person has time to better understand our students and community.

MOTION Ms. Zukowski moved to amend the motion extend the plan through 2023.

Mrs. Larkin seconded.

Vote on amendment: Passes unanimously.

Vote on motion: Passes unanimously.

First Read of Policies:

Mr. Cruson spoke about the policies.

Policy 4111.1/42111.1 Equal Employment Opportunity (Affirmative Action) is mandated by state and federal law.

Policy 4111.3/4211.3 Plan for Minority Recruitment and Selection is brand new and outlines the Board's commitment to recruit a more diverse staff.

Mr. Johnson stated this was really important work and feels the policy is clear, succinct and concise.

Ms. Zukowski felt that increasing the diversity our teachers will only enrich the school system and this was a good step forward.

Policy 4118.239/4218.239 Required COVID-19 Vaccinations is to be rescinded.

Mr. Cruson said the mandates have lapsed and we decided there was no reason to keep this policy on the books.

Minutes of March 1, 2022:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of March 1, 2022. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Vote: 5 ayes, 1 abstained (Mrs. Larkin) Motion passes.

#### Item 8 – Public Participation

Jennifer Padilla, 32 Glen Road, spoke about the DEI position and DEI subcommittee. We are heading in a positive direction. There is no greater gift than equity and inclusion.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved to adjourn. Mrs. Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

#### Item 9 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

---

Donald Ramsey  
Secretary